Collated.

Examination of Dr Short.

Dr Short

June 21st

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Dr Short sworn
Examined by Mr Slidell

I was appointed assay-er in March 1837 & com-menced operations as such on the 12th of March 1838 & have continued in that office ever since

The report of assay of Casas Deposite dated 18th of April 1839 is signed by me

When I received the report I assayed the bullion & signed the report, the num-ber was 100

The report now presents the figures 98 written over the figures 100 at the place for the designation of the number. The alteration in the number of the report took place after it had left my possession & office. I know nothing about the alterations & am sure that when I signed the report the number was 100. The figures in pencil $212.31 at the foot of the re-port are my figures. I be-lieve that the bullion which I assayed was the Casas

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Bullion because I saw the number 100 stamped on the bar & number 100 was the number of the Casas deposite entered in the weighing book. I have not other means of Identifying this deposite or any other. I have had doubts as to whether it was the Casas deposite which I assayed, which doubts have since been removed.

The reasons for my doubts were, that 3 or 4 days after the assay Mr Bradford came to my room, told me that a bar No 100 & which I had concluded to be the Casas deposite was claimed by the Melter & Refiner as part of the Pichnor deposite No 99. & that it required the weight of No 100 to make the weight of Pichnors deposite No 99.

I observed to Mr Bradford that it was very extra-ordinary that Bullion marked with a certain number should be claimed as belonging to a deposite with a different number; that

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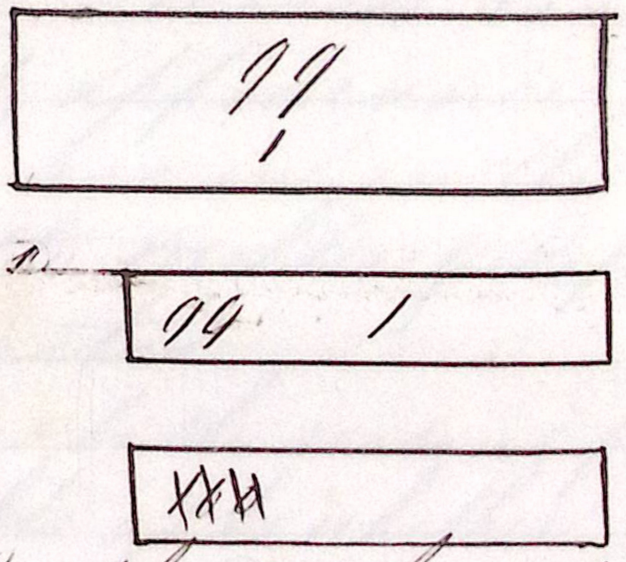
moreover when I took off the assay pieces on the 18th of April I was embarrassed by the mode of numbering I examined the Bullion before me critically, I refer=red to the weigh book & to the best of my knowledge & belief the relative sizes of the different bars corresponded with the weights set down in the weigh book, & I made out for the Su=perintendent a diagram from recollection of the com=parative size of the three bars which I now exhibit to show the impression then made on my mind, & which diagram was about thus, without pretending to ac=curacy



Mr Bradford then told me that on the Bullion being

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brought out by the Melter & Refiner & reweighed, the bar No 100 was required to make up the Pichnor deposite No 99. To satisfy myself I went down to see the Bullion weighed, & the Bullion then produced 2 bars, which were marked 99, & one bar 100, did make the amount of Pichnor's deposite of 99 I was much surprised at the result so contrary to my anticipations, & great doubt for the time existed on my mind; so much so, that I drew a conclusion in a letter that I wrote to Mr Bradford at that time that I had not assayed the Casas deposite, that it appeared to be missing & so far as related to its supposed appearance in the weigh-room on the 18th of April, the Melter & Refiner was exonerated.

And as to the reasons for which the doubts as to whether I had assayed the Casas deposite were dissipated. They are as follows.

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1st On reflecting on the subject I could not feel satisfied that the Bullion produced for reassay & which had been 3 or 4 days in the possession of the Melter & Refiner was the identical bullion that I had seen & assayed on the 18th the impressions of the correspondence between the relative sizes of the bars & the weights in the weigh book had revived with greater force than ever. Moreover I observed on N° 100 a countermark N° 2 which I did not observe on the 18th on the first occasion. I may be deceived as to the fact whether the countermark was on the bar N° 100 assayed on the 18th., but upon the peculiar circumstances of the case I examined with peculiar care on the 18th all the marks & counter marks on the Bullion. My decided impression is that on the 18th there was no counter mark N° 2 on the N° 100 My strongest reason for this impression is that when there is one bar bearing the

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number of 1 deposite it is never counter marked, that is, where there is but one bar. another fact was the unnecessary division of the hammered dollars of Tichnor's deposite into two portions, as one mould will contain more than the amount of those hammered dollars viz. 321 55/100 Ozs.

Then the irregularity in the numbering of No 100 did belong to Tichnor's deposite No 99, why was it marked 100, the number of Casas' deposite.

Again a circumstance that made a strong impression on my mind was that I had assayed nothing to correspond with the title of the French crowns of Tichnor's deposite; the title of French Crowns is known in every mint to be 909 ths. I have never heard of any counterfeits of that description of coin; the deposite was made by the porter of the Merchants Bank

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who is said to be one of the best judges of coin in the City; whilst the assay bar number 100 claims by Mr Maxwell as representing the French crowns belonging to the Tichnors deposite, gave the title after repeated assays of Mexican Dollars falling 13 m under the standard of French crowns.

Another reason was that I was informed by Mr Bradford that the Cash in the Treasurer's office had been balanced and found correct.

Another reason. The calculation of the Melter & Refiner after the dispute of possession of that Bullion had ensured that there must be a certain amount of reserved coin in the vault which coins were weighed in his presence, when the result proved correct not including the Casas deposite.

Another reason. The complaint of the Melter &

* Another reason was, the regular entries being found on the mighty book, of in the Melter & Refiner's own book

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Refiner to the Superintendent on the 16th of April that his order had been violated in a certain case of deposite of Mexican Dollars.

Next the testimony of the Porter who recollects distinctly having on the 16th of april delivered to one of the Melter & Refiner's men a deposite of $200 numbered 100.

I believe that the French crowns of Pickmor's deposite were not assayed.

Being asked why if the French crowns of Pickmor's deposite had not been assayed, he, the witness signed on the 18th of april 1839 a report of assay of Pickmor's French crowns.

Ans: I observed at the time that the title did not correspond with the title of French crowns, but supposed that there might have been some other coin mixed with them to account for the difference of title, & I signed it, in the regular routine of my duty

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I did not feel justified to withhold my signature. I believe that the usage in bringing the assayers' reports to me is in perfect accordance with the instructions of the Director at Philadelphia and that when reports are brought to me the following items are filled up before bringing. "The No. of the deposite— The date of the deposite— The date of the assay— The person by whom deposited, the description of Coins or Bullion— The gross weight" are filled up by the Treasurer. The other collumns in the printed report are filled up by the assayer after he has made his assays.

Quest. Supposing that all the bullion mentioned in the assayer's report of the Pickmor deposite was really a part of the Pickmor deposite must there not have been a mistake in the description of a portion of the Pickmor deposite committed in the weighing book, & in the report-

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of assay prepared at the Treas-
-urers office?

Ans: The conclusion may
be fairly drawn that a
misdescription by calling
it French crowns both in
the weighing & in the assay-
-ers' report has been made
of a portion of the Tichnor
deposite but I consider that
neither myself nor the weig-
-er would be accountable
for such misdescription
in such a case.

When a great discrep-
-ency exists between the
title ascertained by assay
& the ordinary title of the
coin described in the assay-
-ers' report as presented
to me, a reassay is always
made to correct or confirm
the result. But the descrip-
-tion is never altered; I
note the fact & report it to the
superintendent.

In the case of the Tichnor
deposite after repeated
assays of the portions de-
-scribed as French crowns I
communicated it on an

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early occasion to the Superintendent. I reported it shortly afterwards. I felt under no obligation to make an immediate report because the deficiency might be accounted for by the mixture of counterfeit coins & because a greater discrepancy often exists in deposites of hammered and Mexican dollars owing to their being counterfeits of that denomination.

I generally keep the remnants of assay pieces till they are called for; if they accumulated too much I would transfer them to the Treasurers vault; but this has never occurred & the assay pieces remain sometimes for weeks in my office.

Quest. Was there any attempt made to Identify by means of assay pieces remaining in your office the bar stated to have been produced by Mr Maxwell numbered 100 and

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countermarked 2 in order to ascertain if possible, whether this identical bar belonged to the Ticknor or Casas deposite, or any other?

Ans. There was, but the piece did not correspond; the bar however showed that an assay piece had been cut off.— Assay pieces after having been taken from the assay are always rolled out and change their form.— In this instance Mr Bradford perceived on the box a portion of bullion which had been cut off but never rolled out, which he, Bradford, thought I might have cut from the deposite No 100 & had omitted to assay it; that this piece being taken down to the weighing room & applied to bar No 100 was found not to correspond; I told Mr Bradford when he first discovered it that I thought that it was a piece I had cut off some days before

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from some other deposite to repeat my assays, but had found that I did not want it.

Being asked why he believes that the French crowns of the Pichnor's deposite were not assayed Answ. Because since the time of that deposite I have not met with a title of French crowns in any deposite of coins; because I have never heard of any counterfeit of French crowns; because the standard of French crowns is uniform in all the Mints; & because the depositor was the Porter of the Merchants Bank pronounced to be the best judge of coins in this City.

It appears to me that a portion of the Pichnor deposite has disappeared as well as the Casas deposite, but that other bullion has taken its place.

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I am decidedly of opinion that it is possible for the Cases deposite to have disappeared without any imputation upon the honesty of the Melter & Refiner & of the weigher.

Thus, for instance, a bar of bullion might be secreted & carried off by depositors from the weighroom; there are sometimes strange looking people calling to make deposites.

I have seen repeated cases of irregularity in the marking of the bars of Bullion on deposite & otherwise when sent in for assay and have frequently been greatly embarrassed thereby. I have complained of the same to the Superintendent & he has gone with me to the weighing room & has been witness of the fact. I consider the Melter & Refiners department as the source from whence these irregularities arise

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Ques.t State consecutively your opinion of the competency of the following officers: The superintendent— The Treasurer— The Treasurers Clerk— The Melter & Refiner— & the Coiner?

Ans.r I believe Mr Bradford fully competent to discharge the duties of this office but that he has a fault. he is too confiding, too generous & too indulging.

I believe Mr. Forstall to be a man of truth honesty & integrity, but dependent on his Clerks for the details of his office; he is very attentive to the business of his office while there, & manifests considerable zeal & anxiety that the business should be properly conducted.

I believe the Treasurer's Clerk, Mr Demitry, to be competent to perform all the duties of his office; that he is a man of strict truth and sound integrity.

I believe the Melter

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I Refuse to be a false & dishonest man & that he is incompetent to discharge the duties of his office.

I believe the coroner to be fully competent to discharge the duties of his office

Examined by
Mr Bradford

I have never seen a man more zealous & diligent in the performance of the duties of his office than the superintendent.

Examined by
Mr Maxwell

Have you attended every meeting during this investigation?

Ans I have been present at every meeting & though not always in the room have been generally within hearing I consider I have sufficiently attended to the proceeding to understand the testimony

The title of hammered dollars varies very much, say, from about 850 to 894. At no time did I ever send

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back an assay piece by Mr Bradford in reference to the Casas affair; Mr Bradford took an assay piece as I stated above — Mr Bradford seeing it in the box in my room took it, stating he was anxious to compare it. assay pieces have no mark put on them when sent to me for assay; but each piece is put into a numbered hole in a board destined for that purpose and so sent up to me.

Ques^t suppose the assay piece taken back as aforesaid, was by mistake the assay piece ~~upon~~ from the French crowns, and you assayed the two pieces taken from the two bars of hammered dollars of Pichnor, might not one of them have been inadvertantly taken for an assay of the French crowns, when in such case no assay of the French crowns could have been made? Ans^r. I do not think such a thing could have happened under the circumstances. I subsequently recollected the individual

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deposite from which that piece was taken, which occurred several days prior to 18th April 1839. I cannot now specify the deposite, but remembered it heretofore.

Benj asked whether he ever wrote such a letter & opinion to Mr Bradford as is quoted in Mr Maxwells letter to Dr Patterson dated April the 27th 1839

Answer. I cannot recollect the exact phraseology of the letter and have no copy of it whereby to test the accuracy of this quotation.

Ques. Did you ever entertain the opinions expressed in the quotation cited & ascribed to you in Mr Maxwells said letter.

Ans. I did as explained in a postscript dated June 10th 1839 annexed by me to a document now on file.

Benj asked if he, Dr Hart, did not withdraw his first letter to Mr Bradford in relation to the Cairo affair.

Ans. No.

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Quest. Did Mr Bradford apply to you for a copy of said last mentioned letter.
Ans. I believe he did and I furnished a copy as near the original as I could make it from a rough draft; I did not designedly alter or correct any sentence therein. I am not aware that there was an excess of gold in a deposite by Lizardi in July last above what said depositors were paid I have no recollection of having made a report of any such occurrence.

I recollect, now, that there was a transaction about Gold similar to that just referred to, but there was so much falsehood about the matter that I dismissed it from my mind; I never would admit that the bullion was identified. I think I made a report on such a subject in June 1838. I have a memorandum on a loose piece of paper of having assayed two bars Nos 51 & 53 of Lizardi's deposite which was of 4 bars Nos 51. 52. 53 & 54

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The first assay was as I presume on the 17th of April 1838 & the re-assay sometime in June ensuing.

Quest. Did not Mr Bradford about that time give you pieces of gold to assay without telling you know from what bars they were taken?

Ans. I have no distinct recollection of such a circumstance.

I have never reported an average of Melts without assaying each particular melt.

It has sometimes happened on two occasions at this Mint that as many as 20 Melts have given the same title.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the Testimony given by Dr Wm D Short, Assayer of the U.S. Branch Mint at New Orleans, given before J. Sledell Esq. the Commissioner

In testimony whereof I have hereunto signed my name and

affixed the impress of my Seal of
office on this 6th of August at the City
of Sierra Leone.

Thos Davis

Aug 25th 1839

1839 —